The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

AGITATE!
EDUCATE!
ORGANIZE!

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HUGE HOUSING FUND VOTED BY U. S. SENATE

Washington, Jan. 26.—The United States senate established another precedent last week when it appropriated $50,000,000 to the federal shipping board emergency fleet corporation to purchase land, build houses and furnish same for workers employed upon government ship building.

The government board is authorized "to construct on such land houses and all other necessary or convenient facilities, upon such conditions and at such prices as may be determined, and to sell, lease or exchange such houses, land, and facilities upon such terms and conditions as it may determine."

No objection to the principle of the bill was offered, and advocates of the legislation stated that it means more than the building of dwelling houses, but involves the erection of many other kinds of buildings in order that the workmen and their families "shall lead a contended, comfortable and happy existence socially."

It was stated that the experience of England has been that under its ministry of munitions whole towns of 20,000 to 30,000 population, had to be built for the manufacture of war supplies.

Senator Fletcher, who had charge of the bill, said that houses are especially needed at the government's plants at Bristol, Pa.; Newark, N. J., and at Hog Island, near Philadelphia. In a letter to Senator Fletcher Chairman Hurley of the shipping board urged quick action on this appropriation.

The American Federation of Labor has conducted an agitation in favor of the government providing houses for employes on war work. This claim was ignored for some time by men who have insisted that there is a shortage of labor. It is now beginning to dawn on these men that employes will not work where there are no living conditions.

SHIP BUILDERS NOT SCARCE.

Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 26.—"There is no scarcity of ship carpenters in this city or Seattle, notwithstanding the army of men required at the numerous ship yards in the two cities," says Tom E. Anderson, business representative of the district council of ship carpenters.

"From 50 to 100 first-class mechanics have been coming here each day, the past three weeks, looking for work but the work is not to be found at this time," he said.

"We cannot understand where all these men come from; presumably they have heard of a labor scarcity on the coast and are flocking in here in large numbers. I am not familiar with the conditions in Portland, but so far as Puget sound yards are concerned, there is a big surplus of No. 1 mechanics.

"It will require a great deal of building to absorb all the idle men here. We are working in perfect harmony with the Todd, Seaborn and Foundation ship yards here, and aim to always have sufficient men to do the work. But somehow the present supply is way too great for the demand."

A sign is hung on the union's door reading: "All Ship Yards Full."

Similar statements have been made by Fred A. Lucas, secretary of the Boiler Makers' union, who states that "on some days there are as many as 100 men apply at my office for work in ship yards."

AGE LIMIT AN INJUSTICE.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Jan. 26.—"It is well to remember that when injustice comes into the front door of the employe's mind, loyalty to the company's interest flies out of the back window," says a correspondent in the Railway Conductor, official magazine of the Order of Railway Conductors.

"This," continues the writer, "is undoubtedly true in regard to the arbitrary and unjust age limit regulation, which says to the old employe, regardless of past loyalty, efficiency and valuable service, that having reached the age of 45 and through any contingency, whether true to technical violation of a rule or other voluntary action, he happens to be out of employment, he is virtually blacklisted, one might say, by this un-American, inhuman and despotic age limit dictum and is forever debarred from earning his living in his chosen profession—railroading."

LABOR DEFENDS SHERIFF.

Memphis, Tenn., Jan. 26.—The attempt of Chattanooga anti-unionists to oust from office Sheriff Nick P. Bush, of Hamilton county, was condemned at the annual convention of the Tennessee State federation of labor, which called upon trade unionists and sympathizers throughout the state to stand behind this public official.

Sheriff Bush has earned the enmity of anti-unionists because of his law enforcement during the recent Chattanooga street car strike. He insisted that strikebreakers were the only menace to life and property. One of these imported thugs killed a bystander without provocation. The Chattanooga police refused to arrest the murderer and Sheriff Bush entered the armory where the strikebreakers were housed and arrested his man.

LOSES WORKING CARD.

Seattle, Jan. 26.—The board of business agents of the Lawyers' union, officially known as the state board of examiners, has revoked the working card of Hiram G. Gill, mayor of Seattle, for one year, following charges that he allowed the law firm with which he is connected to use his name in soliciting business.

When a trade union disciplines a member for anti-union conduct—which is termed "unethical conduct" by the lawyers—it is denounced by our leading citizens.

STRIKE TO ENFORCE LAW.

Detroit, Mich., Jan. 26.—Nearly 2,000 union electricians employed by Dodge Brothers, the Packard company, the Aluminum Castings company, the Detroit ship yards and the Lincoln Motor company have suspended work to enforce government regulations contained in the contract with these concerns, which are doing war work.

ARMY IS NOT TUBERCULAR.

New York, Jan. 26.—Less than 1 per cent of the 800,000 men examined for the United States army were found to be tubercular, said Col. George M. Bushnell of the surgeon general's department, in a speech in this city.

PRINTERS RAISE WAGES.

Jamestown, N. Y., Jan. 26.—The Typographical union has secured an agreement which increases wages $3 a week. Practically every shop is included.

FEDERAL LABOR BOARD WILL RUSH WAR WORK

Washington, Jan. 26.—Six men and one woman have been named by Secretary of Labor Wilson as an advisory council to assist in the administration of a comprehensive war labor program. John Lind, former governor of Minnesota, is chairman of the council. The other members are: John B. Lennon, of Illinois, member of the Journeymen Tailors' union and ex-treasurer of the A. F. of L.; John J. Casey, of Pennsylvania, member of the Plumbers' union and former member of congress; Agnes Nestor of Illinois, first vice president of the International Glove Workers' union; Waddill Catchings of the Sloss-Sheffield Steel and Iron company, Birmingham, Ala., and the Platt Iron Works company, Dayton, Ohio; A. A. Landon, president of the Buffalo chamber of commerce, and Dr. L. C. Marshall of the University of Chicago.

In a statement announcing these appointments, Secretary of Labor Wilson said:

"This is in accordance with the recent action of the council of national defense, with the approval of the president, in placing in the hands of the secretary of labor formulation and execution of a war labor administration.

"It gives to the department of labor full power to deal with every phase of the war labor problem, including the distribution, transportation, housing and training of workers and effect that centralization and unification that has been sought by the government, labor, capital, and the public.

"The labor administrator and his advisory council will at once take in hand the questions of standardization of labor policies, the providing, distributing and maintaining of a stable and adequate supply of workers, labor dilution and training, priority demands, the adjustment of disputes and the safeguarding of employment, living and housing conditions.

"The United States employment service, now a separate bureau in charge of John B. Densmore, as director, is already being expanded to take care of the task of economic distribution of workers."

WOULD CHINAFY AMERICA.

Chicago, Jan. 26.—Levy Mayer, attorney for the meat packers, chirps his assent to the Chinese immigration plea of Elbert H. Gary, steel trust executive.

"China has an estimated population of about 400,000,000," said Mayer, in a speech before business men. "Over 50,000,000 of that population are able bodied, capable and willing to do hard and productive work. Why did not congress amend our immigration laws and open our doors to a limited number—say, 5,000,000 Chinese, under proper restrictions and possibly for a limited period of time. Not only would such immigration supply the pressing needs in our plants and factories, but they would supplant, during the war, a large number of our men who have been drafted, and who, but for the necessity of producing the essentials of the war could do active service in France and Belgium."

This plea was applauded despite the fact that the government's department of labor has declared there are no "pressing needs" of the labor question in this country other than mobilizing available labor.

Mr. Mayer and his friends, however, seem to long for the good old days when workers stormed the packing house gates pleading for a chance to work.

HIRE BABOONS, IS ADVISED.

Fresno, Cal., Jan. 26.—Chester H. Rowell, editor of the Fresno Republican, advises coolie labor advocates to train baboons and use them in production.

"If the ideal laborer," he says, "is merely a worker who obeys and works like a machine, then let us get trained baboons and keep them in cages and feed them on grass.

"Next to the baboon is the Chinese coolie. You can get more food out of the land by making California a province of China. If you want only money and food, then import Chinese.

"What we want here," continued the editor, "is men who will refuse to work except under sanitary conditions of living, who will leave whenever they can do better some place else and will join a union as soon as they get there. We want men who will compel good housing conditions and demand higher wages."

REFUSE PACKER'S MONEY.

Salt Lake City, Utah, Jan. 26.—Louis F. Swift, head of the Chicago packing house, created a near-tempest in the convention of the National Live Stock association when, after admitting that the profits of Swift & company for the fiscal year were $34,000,000, he told the delegates that "if the packers had made no profit whatever it would make no appreciable difference in the price paid producers for live stock or price paid by consumers for meat."

Swift's statement was immediately challenged by half a dozen angry delegates.

Following his address he tendered his check for $1000 to finance a committee to go to Washington in the interest of the cattle growers. The offer was declined.

WAGE BOARD FOR ROADS.

Washington, Jan. 26.—Director General of Railroads McAdoo has appointed a commission to recommend action on wage and labor questions before the government railroad administration, including wage demands of the railroad brotherhoods. The appointees are:

Secretary of the Interior Lane, Charles C. McChord, member of the interstate commerce commission; J. Harry Covington, chief justice of the District of Columbia supreme court, and William R. Willcox, ex-postmaster of New York city and ex-chairman of the New York public service commission, first district.

TO PENALIZE FOOD WASTERS.

Washington, Jan. 26.—A bill to limit the quantity of foodstuffs that shall be supplied to hotels, restaurants, distributors, manufacturers and others has been introduced in both houses of congress by Senator Pomerene and Representative Lever. The bill is intended to reduce what is asserted to be a great waste still existing in eating places. The act would make wheatless and meatless days compulsory instead of voluntary, as now. A $5,000 fine and six years in prison are maximum penalties under the act.

CAN PREVENT ACCIDENTS.

Philadelphia, Jan. 26.—Nine-tenths of the 240,000 accidents that occurred in this state last year were preventable, according to Harry A. Mackey, chairman of the workmen's compensation board, in a speech in this city.

GOMPERS URGES STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF LABOR LAWS

Extraordinary Emergency Only Can Justify Lower Standards, He Says, in Statement to State Federations of Labor—National Council of Defense Policy Explained.

Washington, Jan. 23, 1918.

State Federations of Labor:

Dear Sirs and Brothers: Upon the state federations of labor devolves the duty of securing beneficial legislation and to prevent hostile legislation inimical to the workers. Central and local bodies should cooperate. Upon the American Federation of Labor devolves the duty of suggesting and advising, as well as aiding, in such situations.

Information reaches me from several states that an effort is being made to suspend labor legislation under a plea of war emergency. As several of these efforts have misinterpreted an action of the council of national defense, I wish to put in your possession exact information as to that action of the council.

In order to safeguard the man power and the labor power of the nation, on December 3, 1917, the council of national defense, in joint meeting with the advisory commission, adopted a series of rules regulating the maintenance of labor standards and labor safety laws, and set forth the restrictions under which their suspension may be effected in cases of extraordinary emergency. That program which prescribes definite time limits and requires proof that suspension is necessary is as follows:

"1. Upon notice from the council of national defense stating that a war emergency or that public welfare require such suspension.

"2. That such suspension should be made only after public hearings had been held, reasonable notice (of not less than five days) of such hearings having been sent to the state labor department or state labor commission, to the plant, organization and employes in the industry affected, and to the public by appropriate notice in the press.

"3. That the particular provisions of the labor laws that are suspended and the length of time of suspension should be stated in a permit to be issued by the governor.

"4. That permits should be issued for limited periods not to exceed six months and to be renewed only upon re-hearings.

"5. That all permits should expire two months after the close of the war.

"6. That the permits should be issued to individual plants and not to an entire industry and only to those plants that comply with all the state factory, building and fire regulations, and that no suspension of outstanding regulations or orders, herein provided for, should be construed to apply to state laws requiring the installation of protective devices.

"7. That copies of all permits issued should be posted in conspicuous places in each factory or plant affected over the proper official signature."

Laws to protect the lives, health and safety of workers and to promote their general welfare are commonly called labor laws. Legislation of this type is based upon scientific principles which have been demonstrated in actual experience. Careful observance of these principles gives the nation workers of the highest grade; hence, workers of the highest creative ability. Workers of this type are even more essential in an emergency than in times of peace. For this reason, the council of national defense is opposed to proposals to break down these laws.

By eliminating fatigue, due to overwork, sickness and accidents are decreased and greater continuity in production results. If we as a nation are going to attack the problem of war production in the most scientific and enlightened manner, we must observe all conditions that are conducive to best production in quality as well as quantity. These conditions have been expressed in labor legislation. The war emergency calls for more thorough enforcement of this legislation rather than for its suspension. The problem of war production must be met by intelligent resourcefulness and management. We must win the war and to win must preserve the virility of our nation. We can not afford to waste our man power by extravagantly, unnecessarily and unwisely wearing out workers. It will devolve upon the labor movements of the various states to protect the interests of wage earners against efforts to wantonly break down labor laws. Alert, intelligent activity is necessary to guard against these efforts which in many states are most subtle and insidious in form.

I urge upon the officers and members of the state federations of labor and all organized labor to be vigilantly on guard to maintain labor standards and labor laws and against all efforts to misconstrue the declaration of the council of national defense into a suggestion that it is necessary at the present time to suspend labor laws to meet war needs. The intention of the council of national defense was diametrically opposite. It was intended to check the onslaught of predatory interests and profiteers.

War emergency will make it necessary to suspend labor laws only when the maintenance of them shall be dangerous to the nation. Determination to suspend these laws should be reached only by some agency that has comprehensive information of the war situation as well as of the economic possibilities of the whole nation. Clearly, such an agency must be national. The council of national defense is in position to obtain information as to both sides of the problem. For these reasons, it is urged that state agents, or others, take no action in suspending state labor laws without having submitted the matter to the council of national defense. The chairman of that council, who is the secretary of war, upon certification from the governor of the state, will have an investigation made and will make recommendation based upon the results of that investigation, and upon information of the whole industrial field as well as of the war emergency need. The workers of the various states are urged to see to it that no other method of determining upon the necessity for suspending labor laws shall be permitted except that recommended by the council of national defense.

Labor everywhere should guard vigilantly against attacks on labor laws and standards. If it is necessary for labor to make sacrifices for our republic, labor stands ready and willing, but labor refuses to be exploited for private gain.

Everything for our nation. Nothing for private profiteering.

SAMUEL GOMPERS,
President, American Federation of Labor.

N. B. Please keep me advised on all phases of any situation which may arise upon the above.

SEAMEN ARE NOT BORN MUST BE DEVELOPED

San Francisco, Jan. 26.—"There are no born seamen. Seamen do not grow in cabbage gardens, they are made at sea and sea alone," said the constitution committee of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, in its preliminary report.

"If there be no boys and ordinary seamen the wages will be based upon a lack of skill in all men going to sea. It was thus in the past. Anybody was considered good enough to go to sea, and most young men were considered too good. The wage was determined by the least skilled who was willing to join the vessel; he set the wages for us all. He gave us our reputation. He received the same wages as the most skilled man because no standard of skill was recognized. When at sea the man who knew his work was compelled to do the work of those who did not know.

"We must either recognize that no skill is needed or we must provide reasonable way in which it can be acquired.

"Up to the present the merchant marine of the United States was supplied with men from Europe, Africa, India, Japan or China. The European supply is cut off and will so remain. The supply from Asia is without limit. If the American cannot be brought to sea the sea will shortly belong to the people of Asia.

"The American must therefore be brought to the sea. This was the real reason for the passage of the seamen's act.

"We must sail with the boys and must treat them so that they will remain at sea (if they are physically fit.) We must teach them the work of a seaman and the traditions of the sea. When they have learned sufficiently to ship as ordinary seamen we must take them into the union and we must teach them at the same time seamanship—the work, the love and traditions of the sea—and unionism as applied to seamen."

DEFEAT U. S. PAPER CONTROL.

Washington, Jan. 26.—A print paper bill, providing for the operation of the news print paper mills of the country by the federal trade commission, was defeated in the senate by a vote of 36 to 32. The bill gave the federal trade commission power to take over the mills and control the manufacture and distribution of print paper when a mill resorted to unfair methods, such as overcharging or withholding paper from a publication.

In urging control of paper manufacturers Senator Smith of Arizona said that the International Paper company and others with it control nearly the entire news print market and in 1917 made more than $105,000,000 profit, an increase of 50 per cent over the preceding year.

URGE CIVIL RIGHTS BILL.

Washington Jan. 26.—Secretary of the Navy Daniels urged the senate judiciary subcommittee to take favorable action on the house soldiers' and sailors' civil rights bill. The peace of mind of a soldier or sailor is essential, he told the committee.

Major Wigmore of the army judge advocate general's department said that hundreds of men who had appealed to the president for exemption from military service based their claim on the ground that if they were drafted they would be unable to meet their civil obligations.

Under the bill a family of a soldier would be protected against the operation of debtor laws.

WOMEN'S WAGE TOO LOW.

Olympia, Wash., Jan. 26.—Cost of living has increased at least 35 per cent over two years ago, says the industrial welfare commission, which insists that if Washington women and child workers are to be maintained according to American standards of living, a much higher wage must be paid than the rates which were established in 1914-1915. The commission appeals to employers to raise wages.

"Unless employers respond satisfactorily," it is stated, "the commission will be compelled to take such other action within its power as may be necessary to insure the desired result."

SEAMEN PROVIDE READING.

San Francisco, Jan. 26.—A committee of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific reports that over one-half of the benefits paid out by this organization in 1916 was for reading and educational purposes. The sum of $9,292 was spent in maintaining reading rooms and the Coast Seamen's Journal cost $7,744. The other items are: Ship wreck benefit, $2,904; funeral benefits, $1,902; hospital supplies, $1,306; legal aid, $886.

HIGH WAGES HURT THEM.

Philadelphia, Jan. 26.—Work on war vessels at the Cramp Ship Building company will be interfered with unless government yards cease offering Cramp employes higher wages, complained the general manager of this concern to the wage adjustment commission of the federal shipping board.

The Cramp people say the government has lured men who cannot be duplicated.

San Francisco, Jan. 26.—The San Francisco Bulletin refuses to become sorrowful or to demand that "something be did" to stop employers raising wages to secure exceptionally skilled mechanics in these war times.

"Obviously," says the Bulletin editor, "this is just the obverse of the disadvantage suffered by working men in slack years, when employment is intermittent and wages are forced down. These workers, however, are professional men in everything but the name and the white collar, and perhaps their gains should be measured by professional standards, and not be involved in a discussion dealing with the great majority of working men. Unskilled and semi-skilled labor has not been so extravagantly fortunate. If anything, its members are perhaps a little worse off because of the war."

PROFITEERS ROUNDED UP.

Washington, Jan. 26.—Three retail grocers of Pittsburg have had their supplies of licensed food commodities cut off by order of the United States food administrator because of unjust and unreasonable charges in handling and dealing in necessaries. This order has been sent to all persons in Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio holding licenses under the food control act, forbidding them "in anywise to deal with, buy from, sell to, or make any sale or agreements for the sale of any licensed commodity, directly or indirectly to" the parties concerned.

One of the grocers bought 25,000 pounds of beet sugar at an average price of $7.76 per 100 pounds and retailed it at an average price of 14 2-3 cents a pound.

This is the first case where the food administrator has exercised his power of indirect control over a retailer doing business of less than $100,000 a year.

HOW WORKERS LIVE.

Washington, Jan. 26.—In protesting against the order of Fuel Administrator Garfield to shut down factories for five days, Congressman Wood of Indiana gave this insight into industrial conditions in his district:

"And right here I wish to call your attention to this fact, that there are thousands and thousands of laboring men in the Calumet region about Indiana Harbor, Gary and Hammond, that have no places in which to live except in the factories where they are working, where they have to sleep in congested apartments by reason of the want of housing facilities."

NON-PARTISAN IN POLITICS.

Cincinnati, Jan. 26.—The international executive board of the International Union of United Brewery and Soft Drink Workers has ruled that an affiliate in Vancouver, British Columbia, can not levy an assessment to further the candidacy of two labor representatives.

In accord with the A. F. of L. non-partisan political policy, the board notified the union that it can not compel members to pay this assessment.

8-HOUR SYSTEM PAYS.

Dallas, Tex., Jan. 26.—An increased efficiency of the Dallas police department is a result of the eight-hour system, inaugurated the first of the year, is the opinion of officials of this city. It is planned to extend the system to other employes of the department.

RAILWAY CLERKS GAIN.

New Orleans, Jan. 26.—The Trans-Mississippi Terminal company and the Texas and Pacific railroad have increased wages of their railway clerks $6.50 a month, effective November 16, when negotiations were started.

CAR MEN RAISE WAGES.

Enid, Okla., Jan. 26.—The Enid City Railway company has averted a strike by raising wages of its motormen and conductors 3 cents an hour. The men demanded 4 cents, but compromised.

PAINTERS RAISE WAGES.

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 26.—Painters' union No. 333 has secured an agreement which establishes a minimum scale of $6 for an eight-hour day.

MINER BLAMES RAILROADS.

Indianapolis, Ind., Jan. 26.—The coal shortage was placed at the door of the railroads by John P. White, ex-president of the United Mine Workers, at the biennial convention of that organization. Mr. White is now associated with Fuel Administrator Garfield.

"It is not a question of production," said the unionist. "There is plenty of production, but the railroads cannot move the coal. There are miners walking the streets right now, unemployed, because the railroads do not furnish cars. There are miles and miles of loaded coal cars on railroad tracks that are not moving. The country has outgrown the railroads, which have not kept pace."

The convention rejected a resolution calling for a federal investigation of complaints that mine workers have remained idle when mines were in operation. Opponents of the investigation took the position that the miners were not responsible for the coal shortage. "Give us the cars and we will give you the coal," said President Frank Hayes. "The present number of mine workers in the country, working eight hours every day, can increase the coal production 300,000,000 tons every year if given the facilities. We have numberless complaints from our members who say that they are not working full time."

President Hayes read a telegram from Samuel B. Montgomery, commissioner of labor for West Virginia, stating that two days prior to sending the telegram 111 out of 162 mines in the Kanawha district were idle, throwing out of employment 8,700 men. In the Clarksburg-Fleming district 107 mines out of 143 were shut down making 7,447 men idle.

MUCH IDLE LABOR.

Seattle, Jan. 26.—Long lines of workers seeking employment waited for the opening of the offices of the federal department of labor war emergency employment service in this city.

Officers of the service roughly estimated the number between 3,000 and 5,000 who demand work and who have been lured to Seattle by those who are interested in flooding the labor market. Officers of the government board declare that drastic action is necessary to stop this influx.

"There are enough general workers here to fill any probable emergency," it is stated, "and the skilled workers who are needed from the outside will be located by our office as fast as we find conditions warranting their importation."

MANY ACCIDENTS TO WOMEN.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 26.—A larger number of accidents to women and a decrease in fatal accidents are the chief feature of the monthly accident summary for December, issued by the state department of labor and industries.

The number of accidents to women was 107, as compared with 91 in November. This is the first time in the statistical year beginning July 1, that the number of accidents to women exceed 100 a month.

Fatal accidents in December fell to 13, about the average figure, as against 21 in each of the two previous months. The total of all accidents for the month was 2,369, not very different from the totals of other recent months.

EMPLOY CHILDREN; FINED.

Deshler, Neb., Jan. 26.—The management of the Deshler Broom company pleaded guilty in the federal court of violating the federal child labor law.

There were 16 counts in the indictment and Judge Munger assessed a fine of $10 for each offense on the management's promise that the national and state child labor laws would hereafter be observed.

Officers of the International Broom and Whisk Makers' union notified the federal department of labor of these violations.

MORE CAR SHORTAGE.

Blooming Rose, W. Va., Jan. 26.—United Mine Workers here have notified the office of Fuel Administrator Garfield that the total coal capacity at this place is 15,000 tons a month and that the output is but 1,500 tons due to an inadequate car supply.

The miners say they are not only willing, but anxious to produce coal, but operators ignore the car shortage and charge the miners with being slackers.

MEAT CUTTERS STRIKE.

Pittsburg, Pa., Jan. 26.—For three months organized butchers and meat cutters have attempted to improve conditions through negotiations with employers and now they are forced to suspend work. Wages are $16 to $18 a week, and the strikers are asking for $22, and a reduction of the 12 and 15-hour work day to 10 hours five days a week and 8 hours on Saturday.

"SHORTAGE OF WAGES" IS NATION'S PROBLEM

San Francisco, Jan. 26.—Shortage of wages and not a shortage of labor is the thought of coolie advocates and others who talk about a scarcity of labor, says Editor Tveitmoe, in Organized Labor, official paper of the California state building trades council.

"The real trouble with this kind of gentry is not scarity of labor; it is shortage of wages," says Tveitmoe.

"Agricultural vocations and industries which pay living wages have no difficulty in getting plenty of able and faithful workers. This is amply evidenced by the large numbers who seek employment every day in the ship yards. Hundreds of men are looking for work that will enable them to earn an honest living. Our farmers also are honest and among those who have been exploited and robbed. They understand that they must pay higher wages to their help when their products are selling at a price several hundred per cent more than what these products brought 10 years ago.

"Raise the pay of the workers! That is the solution of the labor problem. Of course it would be fine for the greedy labor-skinners to flood the state with cheap labor under the pretext of patriotism."

LEATHER WORKERS GAIN.

Dallas, Tex., Jan. 26.—After a contest of many years' duration Leather Workers' union No. 28 has secured an eight-hour union-shop settlement with the Tenison Saddlery company.

Shop committees will be recognized, piece prices are to be computed on the time of the average workman, and time and one-half paid for over eight hours' work.

On government work the company accepts conditions agreed to by the national harness and saddlery commission, which consists of two army officers, two leather contractors representing 90 per cent of this industry, and W. E Bryan, general president of the United Leather Workers' International union. These conditions provide for the union's rate of 50 cents an hour, to become effective in the Tenison plant on Feb. 15 next.

HUGE PROFITS IN STEEL.

New York, Jan. 26.—The Republic Iron and Steel company had the best year of its history in 1917, according to its final quarterly report, which shows net earnings of $28,071,907 from operations and the income from investments. The preceding year, which established a record to that time, brought a net revenue amounting to $16,544,635. After setting aside nearly $10,000,000 as an excess profits tax reserve and making liberal allowances for depreciation, a balance of $17,902,288 was left for dividends. This was $3,100,000 greater than in 1916, when the excess profits tax was not in operation, and the balance available for common stock dividends last year was equal to nearly $60 per share, compared with $36.50 the year before.

WORKERS CONSERVE FOOD.

New York, Jan. 26.—At a mass meeting of organized white goods workers one speaker sarcastically declared that employes who receive $2 a day are conserving the nation's food supply and that their employers are helping them to economize.

The white goods workers are demanding higher wages. Their average rate is now $12 a week, and their employers have promised them an increase of 50 cents a week—next year.

BOILER MAKERS GAIN.

Baltimore, Jan. 26.—Organized boiler makers have won their strike against the Crook company, which accepts the eight-hour day and the union's new wage scale.

Los Angeles, Cal., Jan. 26.—Boiler makers employed by this city have secured wage increases of 6 1-2 cents an hour, with another increase of 3 1-2 cents on February 1. This advance was negotiated by the Boiler Makers' union.

DON'T LIKE PICKETING.

Los Angeles, Cal., Jan. 26.—After forcing a strike of its organized steel workers by discharging several active unionists, the Southern California Steel company asks for an injunction to stop the strikers from picketing or talking with non-unionists.

UPHOLSTERERS GAIN.

Jamestown, N. Y., Jan. 26.—The Shearman Brothers Lounge company has accepted the new wage scale of Upholsterers' union No. 38, which raises rates 5 per cent on all classes of work.

STATE BOARD BARS WOMEN CONDUCTORS

Seattle, Jan. 26.—The Washington public service commission has refused the request of the Puget Sound Traction, Light and Power company to employ women conductors.

After public hearings, the commission ruled that the health of women would be endangered.

The trade union movement opposed this plan, as did State Labor Commissioner Younger, who said:

"If the Seattle traction company will pay the wages demanded and if it can afford to pay the wages men require, it can get all the men it needs. The traction company is not up against a shortage of men. The wages are too low, that's all."

MAY RETURN SOME ROADS.

Washington, Jan. 26.—Director General of Railroads McAdoo indicated to the senate committee on interstate commerce that many small railroads would be returned to their owners and that only the larger railroad systems would be controlled by the government.

In answer to the direct question: "Do you regard all roads as taken over?" the director general said: "I should regard it as fixed as to the large lines. As to the small lines, it may be only constructive. Quite a number of them have been notified that they have not been taken over."

Managers of small railroads are dissatisfied with this possibility, as President Wilson has declared in favor of paying dividends equal to the last three years to stockholders, who realize that this guarantee will not apply to lines that have been returned. These small roads complain that the government will only patronize roads under its jurisdiction and that the small lines will not be apportioned lucrative freight traffic, which can be hauled more quickly by the trunk lines.

Mr McAdoo was asked: "Do you personally believe in government ownership?"

"No," answered the railroad director. "But I do believe it will be impossible to turn the roads back to their owners under exactly the same system by which they were operated when the government took them over. There must be some sort of government control. It should be borne in mind that by the end of the war the public and shippers will be accustomed to dealing with the government and I am convinced that a thorough trial should be given at the end of the war before the railroads are turned back to their owners."

WOMEN IN WAR WORK.

Washington, Jan. 26.—There are approximately 1,266,061 women in the United States engaged in industrial work which is either directly or indirectly necessary to carry on the war, according to an estimate based on surveys made in 15 states for the national league of women's service, by Miss Marie L. Obenauer, with the sanction and assistance of the department of labor. There were approximately 3,500 women engaged in munition factories in 1910; the number is now 100,000, according to Miss Obenauer, who states that this is a conservative estimate. She includes aeroplanes when speaking of munition factories. Most of the women, it is stated, are engaged in weaving, sewing and preserving food.

STOCK FEED SOLD TWICE.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 26.—Sharp practices at the local stock yards were revealed at a hearing by the federal trade commission. It was shown that the stock yards company sells feed to farmers and shippers of live stock at prices netting a good profit. There used to be troughs in the pens for feeding hogs. The company had these taken out and shippers must now feed their hogs by scattering corn on the muddy floors of the pens, thereby increasing the corn wastage. When this wastage got fairly started the company let a contract for $5,000 to a man who gathered up this waste corn, which was cleaned and resold to the shippers.

ACCIDENTS TOTAL 17,757.

Helena, Mont., Jan. 26.—There was a total of 17,757 accidents in this state for 30 months covering the operation of the workmen's compensation law, reports the state accident board. Of this number, 505 were fatal, 14 totally disabled and 362 permanently partially disabled. Of the fatal accidents 348 were in quartz mines, 46 in coal mines, 33 in smelting, 9 in construction work, 12 in lumbering, 15 in electrical power work and 42 in miscellaneous operations.

Compensation benefits and medical fees paid under the workmen's compensation act total $1,170,121.

LONGSHOREMEN WANT MORE.

San Juan, Porto Rico, Jan. 26.—Longshoremen in certain sections of this island are threatening to strike if their wages are not increased. Under the law a worker is not permitted to carry more than 200 pounds when unloading sugar. Employers have ignored this law, on the ground that there is a scarcity of bags, and the workers are handling 225 and 312-pound bags, which must be carried by two men who only receive 2 cents a bag. The workers are asking for 5 cents a bag.

ACCEPT PENALTY CLAUSE.

Indianapolis, Jan. 26.—The United Mine Workers' convention ratified the Washington agreement of October 6 which grants wage increases in the bituminous fields and provides penalties for violation of contracts. The agreement, which became effective November 1 last, is to remain in force until April 1, 1920, unless the war ends before that time, when it terminates automatically.

WANT SEMI-MONTHLY PAY.

Richmond, Va., Jan. 26.—The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks' union will ask the state legislature to amend the semi-monthly pay law by having it include clerical employes.

OPPOSE STATE COSSACKS.

Columbus, Ohio, Jan. 26.—Secretary Donnelly of the state federation of labor, warns affiliates that an attempt will be made to establish a state constabulary in this state.

WAGE GAIN FOR COOPERS.

Los Angeles, Cal., Jan. 26.—The Mock & McClung broom factory has voluntarily raised wages of its union broom makers 12 1-2 per cent.

STOPPAGE OF INDUSTRY REFUTES LACK OF LABOR

Washington, Jan. 26.—"Shortage of labor claimants are put on the defensive by Dr. Garfield's order to close certain industries for five days and other callings for 10 successive Mondays," said Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., in a statement on the fuel administrator's order.

"For months," said Secretary Morrison, "a systematic campaign has been conducted for the purpose of convincing the people that a shortage of labor exists and that this condition endangers the success of our country and its allies in the present war.

"It is also claimed that if democracy is to win, every woman and child must be employed and every labor standard must be annulled during the period of the war.

"Dr. Garfield seems at variance with these claims. He makes this official statement in defense of his order which has been indorsed by President Wilson:

"'It is worse than useless to bend our energies to more manufacturing, when what we have already manufactured lies at tidewater, congesting terminal facilities, jamming the railroad yards and sidetracks for long distances back into the country.

"'It has been excess of production in our war-time speeding up that has done so much to cause congestion on our railroads: that has filled the freight yards to overflowing; that has cluttered the docks of our Atlantic ports with goods to go abroad.

"'Throughout the coal fields scores, even hundreds, of mines are lying idle because of railroad inability to supply the cars to carry away their product. Reports in some cases have shown 90 per cent of the mines in certain fields closed completely for lack of cars.'

"With the facts as above stated," said Secretary Morrison, "the trade union movement asks the American people to form a candid judgment on the claim that there is a shortage of labor."

WILL END PRISON LABOR.

Trenton, N. J., Jan. 26.—Governor Edge has notified firms holding convict labor contracts at the state prison that such contracts will be terminated on July 1, next. The governor's action follows a legislative declaration seven years ago against New Jersey's prison labor contract policy.

After issuing the notice, Governor Edge said:

"I am confident a five and one-half months' notice will give sufficient time to the prison authorities to prepare for proper employment of the prisoners in state work of various kinds. I think also that this is ample time to permit the contractors to make any necessary adjustment of their business.

"I am deeply gratified that New Jersey has reached the point where the contract system is to end. Whether viewed from the economic point of view or from the point of view of the proper treatment and training of prisoners it has been indefensible in principle and an utter failure in practice.

"So far as the financial side of the proposition is concerned, if that can be considered an argument at all by those who have defended the system, it has shown a continuous decrease for years past. The prices obtained by the state have been perfectly ridiculous when compared to labor on the outside."

OPPOSE WOMEN CONDUCTORS.

Kansas City, Mo., Jan. 26.—The Street Car Men's union opposes the local traction company's plan to employ women conductors. Union officials say they can furnish 100 competent motormen and conductors any time the company asks for them and that one day last week, there were 150 applications for work at the company's employment department and only 12 men were put on.

Boston, Jan. 26.—The employment of women on street cars is a step to be taken only as a last resort, according to F. J. Macleod, chairman of the state public service commission.

"To avoid a break down in service," he said, "we must consider the employment of women, but it appears premature and likely to cause unrest and trouble from the male employes, until every effort to secure men for the work has been exhausted, and the public knows it and is satisfied it is so. Then if women have to be employed, it could be done with less disturbance and less public protest."

WANT MINIMUM WAGE LAW.

Albany, N. Y., Jan. 26.—A bill to fix minimum wages for women and minors has been introduced in the state assembly by Senator Robert F. Wagner. The measure would authorize the governor to appoint a commission of three members for three-year terms to investigate the wage subject.

If this investigation reveals that wages are too low in any line of industry, the commission would be authorized to establish a wage board to consist of an equal number of representatives of employes and employers and one or more disinterested persons to represent the public. This board would be empowered to recommend a minimum living wage, but the final determination would be left with the commission.

FRIGHTFUL MORTALITY.

Harrisburg, Pa., Jan. 26.—A grim story of life on Pennsylvania's industrial battle field is told in reports to the department of labor and industry which show that there were 3,152 fatal accidents last year against 2,670 fatalities in 1916.

This startling situation is camouflaged by the announcement that compensation benefits have increased from $4,224,875 in 1916 to $7,161,094 in 1917.

STATE UNIONISTS MEET.

Ashland, Ky., Jan. 26.—A state printing plant and bindery was favored by the annual convention of the state federation of labor. Other legislative demands include free text books, amendments to the workmen's compensation act and abolition of the prison contract labor system. Lexington was selected as the next convention city.

METAL WORKERS GAIN.

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Jan. 26.—Metal trades men in the Wyoming valley have increased wages 15 per cent and reduced hours to 50 a week. This lessens the work week five hours, in many instances.

BARBERS ORGANIZING.

New Orleans, Jan. 26.—The Journeymen Barbers' International union has assigned five representatives to assist its local in unionizing this city.